

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

**Sub Program 1.1.2**

**Question No. 139**

**Senator Boyce asked the following question at the hearing on 8 February 2010:**

Regarding the Australian Human Rights Commission receiving an application for a Temporary Exemption under section 55 of the Disability Discrimination Act from complaints in relation to the provision of captions and audio description from the Hoyts Corporation, Greater Union Organisation, Village Cinemas and Reading Cinemas:

- a) Does the Disability Discrimination Act have as its objective the right to all people to have access to goods and services?
- b) Would granting this application demonstrate double standards or ignorance of the impact it would have on people with vision and hearing disabilities?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

- a) The objects of the Disability Discrimination Act are set out in section 3 of that Act. Section 3 provides as one of the Act's objectives, to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the grounds of disability in the area of the provision of goods, facilities services and land.
- b) The application referred to by Senator Boyce is under consideration by the Australian Human Rights Commission. The Commission is required to undertake an independent assessment of applications for exemption, having regard to the objectives of the Disability Discrimination Act. It is for the Commission to form a view about the appropriateness of any exemption application. Pursuant to section 55, the Commission may reject or allow an exemption application, or allow an application subject to terms and conditions specified in its decision.